

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1 1. (Currently amended) A method for facilitating a key exchange that
2 operates with a pre-shared secret key and that hides identities of parties involved
3 in the key exchange, comprising:
4 initially establishing a negotiated secret key between a first party and a
5 second party by performing communications between the first party and the
6 second party across a network;
7 wherein the communications between the first party and the second party
8 do not allow an eavesdropper to determine the negotiated secret key;
9 encrypting an identifier for the first party using a first key that is a function
10 of a group secret key and the negotiated secret key to form an encrypted identifier;
11 wherein the group secret key is known to members of a group, including
12 the first party and the second party, but is kept secret from parties outside of the
13 group;
14 sending the encrypted identifier from the first party across the network to
15 the second party;
16 allowing the second party to decrypt the encrypted identifier by using the
17 group secret key and the negotiated secret key;
18 allowing the second party to use the identifier to look up the pre-shared
19 secret key in a table of pre-shared secret keys that was previously established
20 between the first party and the second party; and

21 using the pre-shared secret key in forming at least one subsequent
22 communication between the first party and the second party.

1 2 (Canceled).

1 3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein establishing the
2 negotiated secret key involves using the Diffie-Hellman method to establish the
3 negotiated secret key.

1 4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the second party is a firewall
2 through which the first party seeks to communicate.

1 5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the first party is a person
2 seeking to communicate through the firewall from one of a number of possible
3 Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.

1 6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the group secret key is one of
2 a plurality of group secret keys maintained by the group.

1 7. (Currently amended) A method for facilitating a key exchange that
2 operates with a pre-shared secret key and that hides identities of parties involved
3 in the key exchange, comprising:

4 initially establishing a negotiated secret key between a first party and a
5 second party by performing communications between the first party and the
6 second party across a network;

7 wherein the communications between the first party and the second party
8 do not allow an eavesdropper to determine the negotiated secret key;

9 allowing the first party to encrypt an identifier for the first using a first key
10 that is a function of a group secret key and the negotiated secret key to form an
11 encrypted identifier;
12 wherein the group secret key is known to members of a group, including
13 the first party and the second party, but is kept secret from parties outside of the
14 group;
15 receiving the encrypted identifier at the second party from the first party
16 across the network;
17 decrypting the encrypted identifier by using the group secret key and the
18 negotiated secret key;
19 using the identifier to lookup the pre-shared secret key in a table of pre-
20 shared secret keys that was previously established between the first party and the
21 second party; and
22 using the pre-shared secret key in forming at least one subsequent
23 communication between the first party and the second party.

1 8 (Canceled)

1 9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein establishing the
2 negotiated secret key involves using the Diffie-Hellman method to establish the
3 negotiated secret key.

1 10. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the second party is a
2 firewall through which the first party seeks to communicate.

1 11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the first party is a person
2 seeking to communicate through the firewall from one of a number of possible
3 Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.

1 12. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the group secret key is one
2 of a plurality of group secret keys maintained by the group.

1 13. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing
2 instructions that when executed by a computer cause the computer to perform a
3 method for facilitating a key exchange that operates with a pre-shared secret key
4 and that hides identities of parties involved in the key exchange, the method
5 comprising:

6 initially establishing a negotiated secret key between a first party and a
7 second party by performing communications between the first party and the
8 second party across a network;

9 wherein the communications between the first party and the second party
10 do not allow an eavesdropper to determine the negotiated secret key;

11 encrypting an identifier for the first party using a first key that is a function
12 of a group secret key and the negotiated secret key to form an encrypted identifier;

13 wherein the group secret key is known to members of a group, including
14 the first party and the second party, but is kept secret from parties outside of the
15 group;

16 sending the encrypted identifier from the first party across the network to
17 the second party;

18 allowing the second party to decrypt the encrypted identifier by using the
19 group secret key and the negotiated secret key;

20 allowing the second party to use the identifier to look up the pre-shared
21 secret key in a table of pre-shared secret keys that was previously established
22 between the first party and the second party; and

23 using the pre-shared secret key in forming at least one subsequent
24 communication between the first party and the second party.

1 14 (Canceled).

1 15. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of
2 claim 13, wherein establishing the negotiated secret key involves using the
3 Diffie-Hellman method to establish the negotiated secret key.

1 16. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
2 wherein the second party is a firewall through which the first party seeks to
3 communicate.

1 17. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 16,
2 wherein the first party is a person seeking to communicate through the firewall
3 from one of a number of possible Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.

1 18. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13,
2 wherein the group secret key is one of a plurality of group secret keys maintained
3 by the group.

1 19. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing
2 instructions that when executed by a computer cause the computer to perform a
3 method for facilitating a key exchange that operates with a pre-shared secret key
4 and that hides identities of parties involved in the key exchange, the method
5 comprising:
6 establishing a negotiated secret key between a first party and a second
7 party by performing communications between the first party and the second party
8 across a network;
9 wherein the communications between the first party and the second party
10 do not allow an eavesdropper to determine the negotiated secret key;

11 allowing the first party to encrypt an identifier for the first party using a
12 first key that is a function of a group secret key and the negotiated secret key to
13 form an encrypted identifier;
14 wherein the group secret key is known to members of a group, including
15 the first party and the second party, but is kept secret from parties outside of the
16 group;
17 receiving the encrypted identifier at the second party from the first party
18 across the network;
19 decrypting the encrypted identifier by using the group secret key and the
20 negotiated secret key;
21 using the identifier to lookup the pre-shared secret key in a table of pre-
22 shared secret keys that was previously established between the first party and the
23 second party; and
24 using the pre-shared secret key in forming at least one subsequent
25 communication between the first party and the second party.

1 20. (Currently amended) An apparatus that facilitates a key exchange that
2 operates with a pre-shared secret key and that hides identities of parties involved
3 in the key exchange, the apparatus comprising:
4 establishing a negotiated secret key between a first party and a second
5 party by performing communications between the first party and the second party
6 across a network;
7 wherein the communications between the first party and the second party
8 do not allow an eavesdropper to determine the negotiated secret key;
9 an encryption mechanism that is configured to encrypt an identifier for the
10 first party using a first key that is a function of a group secret key and the
11 negotiated secret key to form an encrypted identifier;

12 wherein the group secret key is known to members of a group, including
13 the first party and the second party, but is kept secret from parties outside of the
14 group;
15 a communication mechanism that is configured to send the encrypted
16 identifier from the first party across the network to the second party, so that the
17 second party can decrypt the encrypted identifier by using the group secret key and
18 the negotiated secret key in order to use the identifier to lookup the pre-shared
19 secret key in a table of pre-shared secret keys that was previously established
20 between the first party and the second party; and
21 wherein the communication mechanism is additionally configured to use
22 the pre-shared secret key to encrypt at least one subsequent communication
23 between the first party and the second party.

1 21 (Canceled)

1 22. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein establishing
2 the negotiated secret key involves using the Diffie-Hellman method to establish
3 the negotiated secret key.

1 23. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the second party is a
2 firewall through which the first party seeks to communicate.

1 24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the first party is a person
2 seeking to communicate through the firewall from one of a number of possible
3 Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.

1 25. (Original) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the group secret key is
2 one of a plurality of group secret keys maintained by the group.

1 26. (Currently amended) An apparatus that facilitates a key exchange that
2 operates with a pre-shared secret key and that hides identities of parties involved
3 in the key exchange, the apparatus comprising:
4 establishing a negotiated secret key between a first party and a second
5 party by performing communications between the first party and the second party
6 across a network;
7 wherein the communications between the first party and the second party
8 do not allow an eavesdropper to determine the negotiated secret key;
9 a communication mechanism that is configured to receive an encrypted
10 identifier at the second party from the first party across the network;
11 wherein the encrypted identifier was produced by encrypting an identifier
12 for the first party using a first key that is a function of a group secret key and the
13 negotiated secret key;
14 wherein the group secret key is known to members of a group, including
15 the first party and the second party, but is kept secret from parties outside of the
16 group;
17 a decryption mechanism that is configured to decrypt the encrypted
18 identifier by using the group secret key and the negotiated secret key;
19 a lookup mechanism that is configured to use the identifier to look up the
20 pre-shared secret key in a table of pre-shared secret keys that was previously
21 established between the first party and the second party; and
22 wherein the communication mechanism is additionally configured to use
23 the pre-shared secret key in forming at least one subsequent communication
24 between the first party and the second party.